Psychological Tests & Measurements

PSYC320-001, Spring 2017

Basic Information

Time: Mondays & Wednesdays 9:00–10:15 AM

Location: West Building 1008

Instructor: Wenmo Kong, M.A.

Office Hours: Thursdays 3:00–4:00 PM (in David King Hall 3041); or by appointment

Communication: Via email, wkong2@masonlive.gmu.edu

Lab/Teaching Assistant: Balca Bolunmez

Email: bbolunme@masonlive.gmu.edu

Office Hours: Thursdays 1:00-2:00 PM; or by appointment

Textbook: Psychological Testing and Assessment: An Introduction to Tests and Measurement (8th Edition; McGraw-Hill) by Ronald Jay Cohen, Mark Swerdlik, and Edward Sturman. ISBN-10: 0078035309 | ISBN-13: 978-0078035302

Additional readings: To be assigned throughout the semester and will be available through Blackboard and GMU library.

Course Objectives

Psychological measurement, or psychometrics, is fundamental to social science research and application. This class will introduce you to the central concepts of psychometrics by reviewing the underlying theory and its applications. The overall goal of the class is for each of you to gain the ability to critically evaluate existing psychological tests as well as develop new ones. This will be done by providing:

(1) A fuller understanding of the statistical concepts that underlie tests and test scores;

(2) An in-depth treatment of selected “landmark” tests;

(3) Sources of professional criticism;

(4) Guidance in creating a psychological test of an individual difference.

Grading System

Your grade will be based on your performance on:	% of Total Grade
(1) Class participation	10%
(2) Popquizzes	10%
(3) Assignments	15%
(4) Group project paper	15%
(5) Group project presentation	5%
(6) Final Exam	20%
(7) Lab grade	25%

Final course grades will be determined using the scale below:

A+ 98-100	A 93-97	A- 90-92	B+ 87-89
B 83-86	B- 80-82	C+ 77-79	C 73-76
C- 70-72	D+ 67-69	D 63-66	D- 60-62
F Below 60			

Important Information

Use of electronic devices in class meetings: Cell phones, pagers, and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Please keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets (e.g., iPads) may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only, engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g., gaming, email, chat, etc.) will result in a significant deduction in your participation grade.

Technology expectations: All students are expected to maintain and regularly access their Mason e-mail accounts. If you are having your Mason mail forwarded to another account, please ensure that your Mason account does not exceed the assigned limit, causing mail to bounce back to the sender.

Official Communications via GMU E-mail: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Disability accommodations: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact me early in the semester. If you have not already done so, contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Please keep in mind that it might not be possible to grant last-minute requests for accommodations, so it is important to make all arrangements well before the date when the accommodation is needed.

Academic Integrity: Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. This course is a "learning community." Academic integrity in a learning community simply means that when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task; when you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

Enrollment: Every student is responsible for verifying correct enrollment. Graded work will not be returned to students who are not officially enrolled.

Class Cancellation Policy: Should the university shut down for any reason (e.g., snow day; catastrophic power failure), the instructor will send out a class-wide email to confirm whether or not class will be held. Should class be canceled, any revisions to the syllabus and any pertinent assignments will be discussed both in class and through email. *Note: should class be canceled, assignments due during the canceled class still remain due and are expected to be submitted electronically through Blackboard. Late submissions will not be accepted.*

Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus and its content to improve student learning. Any changes will be announced orally and in writing.

Important Dates

Last day to add a class: Monday, January 30

Last day to drop a class: Friday, February 24

Spring break: Monday, March 13 – Sunday, March 19

Course Requirements

Class Participation: You need to arrive class on time and actively participate in discussions about the assigned readings to receive class participation credit. In a genuine emergency, I will allow a late arrival or an absence if you discuss the reason with me in advance of the class. “Active participation” includes both thoughtful speaking (responding to the ongoing thread of discussion) about the readings assigned and attentive listening (listening closely and critically while other students are speaking). Constructive criticism is encouraged and students are implored to not take others’ (or the instructor’s) feedback negatively (i.e., the wrong way). The purpose is to discuss, learn from one another, and develop as human beings.

Popquizzes: There will be 5 popquizzes throughout the semester. They will begin at 9:00AM sharp and end promptly at 9:15 AM. You will not know when I will give the quizzes. If you arrive to class on time, you will be able to use all 15 minutes. If you arrive late, however, you will have less time to complete the quizzes. Reviewing the readings that I will assign every week and actively participating in class will be sufficient to receive a satisfactory grade on the quizzes. You are allowed to drop one of your 5 quiz grades. If you miss a class on which a quiz occurs, that will be the quiz grade that you drop. I will not give makeups on the quizzes unless there is a legitimate and documented reasons such as sickness or malfunctioning car on the day of the quiz.

Assignments: There will be three assignments for which you will turn in a 3–5 page (double-spaced, hard copy) write up of your investigations. Assignment #1 will be submitted individually and Assignment# 2 and 3 will be submitted in groups. I will provide clear instructions for the assignments. Also, some time in the lab meetings will be spent to get you started with the assignments and answer your questions. Electronic copies of assignments are not accepted. You are expected to return the assignments by 9:00 AM on the Monday of the due week. Late assignments will be accepted for 7 days following the deadline but result in lower grades, such that 10% of your grade will be taken away for each day you delay submission. Exceptions will only be made in emergency situations with some of form of official documentation.

Group Project: As the term project, groups of 3-4 students will develop a psychological scale of their choice. I will encourage you to socialize in class and team up with students who have similar interests and the same lab session so as to facilitate teamwork. The scale development project proposal (Assignment#2), group project paper, and group presentation will comprise 5%, 15%, and 5% of your grade respectively. I will provide clear instructions for each of these requirements. Also, a major proportion of the lab meetings will be spent on helping you put this project together. I require involvement of everyone in the team in all parts of the project (i.e., proposal, paper, and presentation). Furthermore, team members will evaluate each other’s contribution to the project. I will consider this evaluation when assigning course grades, primarily to adjust for any “free-riders.”

Final Exam: The final exam will include multiple choice and short essay questions to cover the entire course material. The readings, assignments, quizzes, and the scale development project will prepare you for the final exam. There will be review sessions both in the class and lab prior to the exam. There will be no makeups for the final, unless the university is closed on the exam date. For details, please see https://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/fall-2016-semester/final-exams/.

Lab Work: In lab meetings, you will have a chance to receive help on getting started with the class assignments, make progress toward your group project, and gain hands-on experience computing the statistics we discuss in class. Similar to class participation, you are required to arrive lab on time, stay during the entire lab period, and complete the work required by your TA. The grade your TA assigns for your performance in the lab meetings will comprise a major proportion of your final course grade.

Tentative Class Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments Due
1	1/23 & 1/25	Introductions, Syllabus, Statistical Concepts	Textbook chapters 1, 2, 3 (pages 28–99) Course syllabus
2	1/30 & 2/1	Statistical Concepts cont., Tests and Testing Overview	Textbook chapters 3 (pages 99–end), 4 Additional reading: Podsakoff et al. (2016) *Assignment#1: Learning Styles Questionnaire
3	2/6 & 2/8	Statistical Concepts cont., Tests and Testing Overview	Textbook chapters 3 (pages 99–end), 4
4	2/13 & 2/15	Reliability, Validity	Textbook chapters 5, 6
5	2/20 & 2/22	Utility, Test Development Student Scale Development Project Updates	Textbook chapters 7, 8
6	2/27 & 3/1	Intelligence and its Measurement, Tests of Intelligence	Textbook chapters 9, 10 *Assignment#2: Scale development group project proposal (3~5 pages)
7	3/6 & 3/8	Personality Assessment Overview	Textbook chapter 12 Additional reading: Goldberg (1990)
8	3/13 & 3/15	Spring Break	N/A
9	3/20 & 3/22	Clinical and Counseling Assessment Neuropsychological Assessment	Textbook chapter 14 Textbook chapter 15
10	3/27 & 3/29	Personality Assessment Methods Psychological Test Evaluation Assignment review	Textbook chapter 13
11	4/3 & 4/5	Assessment for Education	Textbook chapter 11 Additional reading: Kulkarni et al. (2015) *Assignment#3: Psychological Test Evaluation
12	4/10 & 4/12	Assessment, Careers, and Business	Textbook chapter 16 Additional reading: Meriac et al. (2014)
13	4/17 & 4/19	Student Presentations	Scale Development Group Project PowerPoint Presentation
14	4/24	Remaining Student Presentations (No Class If No Remaining Presentations)	
	4/26	No Class	
15	5/1 & 5/3	Final Exam Review	Scale Development Group Project Paper
16	5/8	Reading Day; No Class	N/A
17	5/15	Final Exam (7:30–10:15AM)	N/A

* Assignments are due on Monday of that week.

References for additional readings:

1) Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2016). Recommendations for creating better concept definitions in the organizational, behavioral, and social sciences. *Organizational Research Methods*, 1094428115624965.
2) Goldberg, L.R. (1990). An Alternative “description of personality”: The big-five factor structure. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 59, 1216– 1229.
3) Kulkarni, C., Wei, K. P., Le, H., Chia, D., Papadopoulos, K., Cheng, J., ... & Klemmer, S. R. (2015). Peer and self assessment in massive online classes. In *Design thinking research* (pp. 131-168). Springer International Publishing.
4) Meriac, J. P., Hoffman, B. J., & Woehr, D. J. (2014). A conceptual and empirical review of the structure of assessment center dimensions. *Journal of Management*, *40*(5), 1269-1296.